

Seed Tree

Projects in Progress



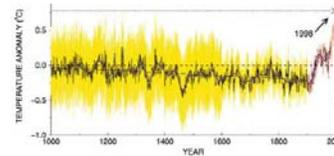
Issue 11

SeedTree Annual Report 2006

Synchronizing with the Cycles

After reviewing approaches and results of our first decade, we embarked on our second, aiming to refine our focus to the essentials of our program, which could then, like a seed, be dispersed to widely diverse communities. Robust national democratic action brought long-sought peace to Nepal and affirmed the need for change in America. SeedTree is galvanizing our infrastructure to meet the expanding opportunities offered by these changing contexts.

Our educational projects led us to consider our human impacts on the natural cycles of earth, water, atmosphere and energy. The creation of fertile soil from earth's mantle, water cycling through ocean, air, and watersheds, the interactions of energy and atmosphere -- considering all these only reaffirmed the vital value of trees and forests. Trees integrate all these cyclic interactive processes to maintain healthy, life-supporting ecosystems. Rural participants know well the immediate benefits trees offer for food, fodder, fuel, timber, cooling shade and protection from the eroding effects of wind and water. Tree's less obvious, photosynthesizing, carbon-sequestering interactions with solar energy and atmosphere are also vital to life. Growing



With global temperature rising so, we need to understand why and what we can do.

awareness of the undeniable link between carbon and warming supported tree-planting innovation. We began to diversify our Indian coastal recovery mangrove restoration, adding inland a native, non-edible oilseed tree, from which biodiesel can eventually be made for local use by the fishing villages still shaken by the 2004 tsunami.

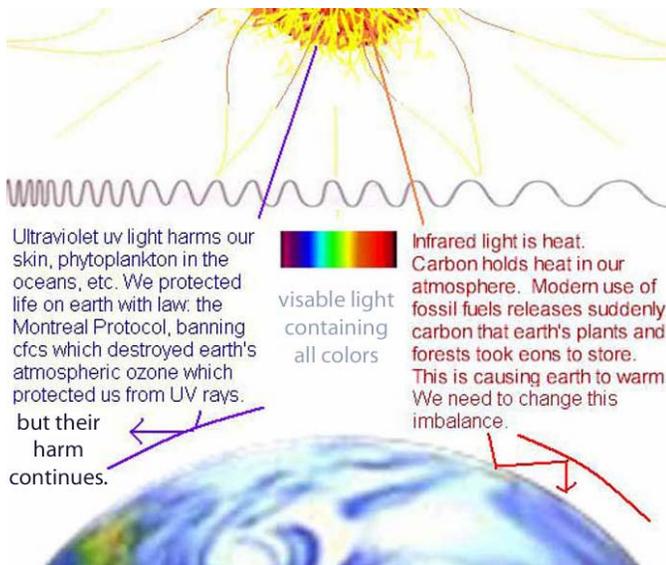
Responsible businesses contributed. Working Assets, planting 17 trees for every ton of paper they use, gave \$3000 to support planting of 24,000 trees. While planting trees will not



One year old planted Mangrove, left



Pongamia nursery and planting, below



eliminate the need to wean ourselves from the fossil fuels, it can allow a *breathing space* for us to transition from a fossil fuel-based to a renewable energy based economy. SeedTree programs planted **145,200 trees in 2006** in Nepal, India, and Maine. Most were planted to live their full lives, *ie.*, for fruit or nuts, to grace avenues or inspire as sacred trees. When South Asia has so great a diversity of native species and ancient traditional knowledge of these species' beneficial and medicinal properties, it is a shame to see plantations of exotic monocultures. We hope to further diversify these, meeting more local needs. SeedTree reaffirmed our commitment to focus support on fine native trees.



Chiuri, *Aesandra Butyraceae*, fruit and seed above, is a tree we promoted in 2006. It has great cultural significance to the Chepang people of Nepal's Chitwan highlands. A seedling was traditionally given the bride as dowry at marriage since it would provide her with much that she would need, including fruit and oil. Chiuri were planted to claim property; cutting one is taboo. Today chiuri are commonly prized for their fruit and also as a support for bee-keeping. Also called the 'butter tree,' chiuri may have fuel oil potential.



Men, women and children of Tikari, Dang, Nepal gather below for photo during riparian chiuri planting. The flowering trees will augment Dang's honey production, which is among Nepal's finest.

Besides the income from honey, bee-keeping adds ecological value by fostering those pollinators upon whose work our forests, horticulture and agriculture depend. Pollination is another of the invaluable services of intact nature.



Madi Program Manager Yubaraj Ghatane stands in the center of a planting group by a water harvest pond. Such ponds supported by SeedTree Nepal have often doubled agricultural yields. In a hillside belt of land otherwise unsuited to agriculture, planting mulberry has provided many of our groups there with means of profitably and beneficially utilizing land.



Madi woman feeds mulberry leaf to silk-worms.

Such marketable non-timber forest products

(NTFPs) are a vital link in sustaining our forests, providing income *and* incentive to conserve forests. It takes knowledge of species and their uses to appreciate and utilize them. To this end, Bishnu Bishwokarma (above with Tom Hammett), C.K. Kinsey and P. Chaudhary of STN and ST, and Prof. Dongal of the Inst. of Ag. published a study in "Bankojanakari," the forestry journal of Nepal, drawing on our participatory field research into the folk uses of plant species. The study suggests the importance of indigenous knowledge of species to their utilization. SeedTree's initial dialogue with a community helps share and document, protecting this valuable knowledge, even from patented "discoveries" that could restrict local access to traditional native foods or medicines.



Bishnu's Madi home, above, was bare in 1997. Now, trees shade the small plot still allowing for kitchen garden space and leaves to feed a goat. Such homestead plantings are a first priority for our groups' plantings. Other popular sites are shelterbelts on fields, roads, and riverbanks, and enrichment plantings in old forest or to diversify new plantations.



In Maine, Kirsten Edelglass and alumnae of Chevonki's Canoe Expedition for Maine Girls joined SeedTree's brown ash project with John Neptune of the Penobscot Nation's Boys and Girls Club for an enrichment planting of brown ash on the forested Olamon Island. John led canoes full of the seedlings to planting sites on Olamon Island, a former center of Penobscot tribal life.



Just south of Olamon we met Bill MacKowsky, cutting strips of brown ash for his traditional baskets and creels. Bill was already interested in

brown ash restoration on the extensive Down East Land Trust holdings. He was as enthused to see SeedTree's start as we were delighted to provide seedlings to such a motivated planter. Lucy Leaf also led a small party planting ash seedlings on the Gold Stream Preserve in Surry, Maine.

Educating for Economic Viability

as well as Ecological Integrity

SeedTree Nepal's manual for rural human ecology "Ourselves and Our Environment," was revised and expanded, to help people of all levels, even illiterates (over half Nepalese), to take an informed role in environmental management. Twelve of these classes involving over 300 people were conducted in 3 districts, expanding to include Salyan. Graduates easily welcome any innovative ecological ideas introduced, as Tom Hammett and



Conservation Mgmt. Inst.'s Becky Murray found during their January visit to some of our groups. The basket is made of recycled wrappers and the brick



of charcoal, from an invasive exotic species of vine *chromolaena odorata*, appropriately called *banmara* (literally, "forest killer"). Tom and Becky found that while the groups knew much of NTFPs and handicrafts, they lacked marketing skills. SeedTree intends to further encourage our groups toward closing the economic cycles in sync with their ecological savvy.

SeedTree Nepal organized 4 District level trainings and stakeholder meetings on topics related to natural resources and solid waste management in Bharatpur, Chitwan, focusing on the 3Rs: Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle.

In Dang, we installed 14 home biogas systems. and 50 improved cooking stoves. Fifty more were installed in adjacent Salyan, for smoke free, more healthy, efficient homes. Many more such small



eco-friendly enterprises are being implemented through our Community Environmental Trust Funds (CETFs). We were able to endow 3 of these revolving microcredit endowments, enabling groups to continue self-initiated, ecologically responsible and income generating projects after completing our course.



Tom Hammett coordinated VA Tech's hosting of John Perlin's presentation of "A Forest Journey," with panel afterwards. Nearly 100 attended. Tom's class in world forestry uses John's classic history of the role of wood and civilization as a text. Tom invited John and Carol Kinsey to join class discussions and arranged several meetings at the university for the SeedTree contingent. John is leading a Debley Foundation supported development of an academic course. It will extend the "Forest Journey" deeper into the paleobotanical past to consider how the first trees transformed our early planet's sweltering atmosphere into something more hospitable for our species. Carol will draw on SeedTree's experience looking toward a feasible future — a quality life-supporting future for earth's family.



Barbara, left, in sari at a presentation she arranged in CA.

Barbara Bradford's philanthropic concerns have often initiated developments in our education program; this year was no exception. In addition scholarships for 3 students in Chitwan and boarding scholarships for the 5 Tulsi School girls, above, we added a sixth, Sita, (right) and intermediate college student, Pramir K.C., above with his father Ved, our Program Manager in Dang and Salyan. Since childhood, Pramir has participated in SeedTree's work, collecting seed, leading children's tree planting groups and serving as a kind big brother to the girls at Tulsi School while keeping their sponsor well informed of their progress.

Principal Bishma K.C. (rear, left, above) has been a strong ally in Western Nepal, hosting on the school grounds our workshops and demonstration nurseries for remote village reps as well as student tree-planting. For over a decade he has longed to bring science education to students of the region. Barbara and Kate Kinley Gregg have supported purchase of books and supplies for the labs, (2 of 3, right) for biology, physics and chemistry. SeedTree will help Bishma introduce seminar and field work in earth systems science and human ecology, innovative in Nepal.



"One of the main objectives of education is to train oneself to adjust and live in a healthy and beautiful home. "Only one earth, care and share." Earth is our common home..." - Bishma K. C.

2006 SeedTree Accomplishments Summary

225,200 trees of 20 species planted by 19 groups in 3 countries
2 water pumps in India
Revised Nepalese manual and printed 1000 copies
12 human Ecology classes conducted in 3 districts of Nepal

Outreach and adult education in VA, CA, ME, and Nepal
14 home biogas systems in Dang, Nepal
100 smokeless improved efficiency stoves in Nepal
3 Community Environmental Trust Funds, Nepal

We welcome your participation as we look forward to expanding tree planting, develop and integrate education into our work, including outdoor science education for children in Ecuador, and restructuring at home.